



EETP Information

The **Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program** (EETP) provides forgivable loans to Nebraska teachers enrolled in an eligible graduate program. The EETP is part of the Excellence in Teaching Act passed by the Nebraska Legislature and signed into law on April 22, 2009.

Eligibility

An applicant must meet the following criteria to be considered for an EETP loan:

- Be a certificated teacher employed to teach in an approved or accredited school in Nebraska;
- Be enrolled in an eligible institution in an eligible graduate program that results in obtaining a graduate degree;
- Be majoring (pursuing a degree) in:
 - a shortage area, or
 - Curriculum and Instruction, or
 - a subject area in which a secular teaching endorsement is already held, or
 - a subject area that will result in an additional secular teaching endorsement which the superintendent of the school district or head administrator of a nonpublic school believes will be beneficial to the students of the school district or school;
- Be a resident Nebraska student;
- Agree to complete the eligible graduate program and major on which the his/her eligibility for an EETP loan was based; and
- Commit to teach in an accredited or approved public or private school in Nebraska upon successful completion of the eligible graduate program for a time period equal to the number of years required for loan forgiveness.

PLEASE NOTE: Graduate programs resulting in obtaining an Administrative or Special Services Certificate are NOT eligible for the Enhancing Excellence Loan Program.

Loan Amount

Eligible students may apply on an annual basis for an EETP loan in an amount of not more than \$175 per credit hour, up to a maximum of \$3,000. Coursework eligible for payment includes classes that have been identified by the institution in which the student is enrolled as part of their eligible graduate program and that begin during the loan award period (July 1 – June 30). EETP loans awarded to individual students may not exceed five consecutive years.

Loan Repayment

Prior to receiving any EETP loan funds, the borrower will enter into a contract with the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) which requires repayment of the loan, with interest, if the borrower:

- Does not maintain employment as a certificated teacher in an approved or accredited school in Nebraska while enrolled in the eligible graduate program;
- Does not remain enrolled in the eligible graduate program;
- Does not maintain resident Nebraska student status;
- Does not complete the requirements for graduation within five (5) years from the date of the initial EETP Loan Contract ;
- Does not complete the program or major for which the loan was received;;
- Does not maintain employment as a full-time teacher teaching in an approved or accredited school in Nebraska for the number of years that they are required to remain employed as a teacher under the EETP Loan Contract; or
- Does not provide NDE with the required documentation as outlined in the EETP Loan Contract.

Loan Forgiveness

The borrower must successfully complete the eligible graduate program and major for which the loan was received and maintain certification and employment as a full-time teacher in Nebraska for a time period equal to the number of years required for loan forgiveness.

Beginning after the first two years of teaching full-time in Nebraska following completion of the eligible graduate program, for each year that the borrower teaches full-time in Nebraska, the loan will be forgiven in an amount of up to \$3,000. If the borrower teaches full-time in a local school system that is classified as very sparse or in a school building that meets the high poverty guidelines established by NDE in the year(s) in which loan forgiveness commences, the loan will be forgiven each year in an amount of up to \$6,000.

Timeline for Applications

The deadline for applications is determined by the institution. Application submission guidelines, deadlines and other information for each institution are available on the [EETP Application Materials](#) page of the Nebraska Teacher Education web site. (Funding for EETP awards has been eliminated for the next two years in [LB333](#). No applications will be taken for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 award years.)

Applications submitted for consideration of an EETP loan will undergo an initial review by the institution. Applications will then be forwarded by the institution to the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) on or before June 1 for final review and approval. Selected recipients will be notified by NDE of their loan award and will receive an EETP Loan Contract which must be completed, signed and returned to NDE prior to any loan funds being made available. A delay in returning the contract may result in a postponement of available funds or the withdrawal of the loan award.

Timeline for Fund Disbursement

EETP loan funds are available for disbursement after July 1 and are distributed throughout the loan award period, not as a lump sum. Prior to receiving any money from an EETP loan, the borrower must provide NDE with documentation (grade report/transcript) that they have officially registered for the class(es) for which payment is being requested. Payments are mailed directly to the borrower and may take up to four weeks for processing.

At the end of the contract period, EETP recipients must provide NDE with proof of completion of the coursework for which funds were awarded. This documentation (grade report/transcript) will serve to verify that you are in good standing with contract provisions and are not subject to immediate repayment.

At the end of the graduate program, EETP recipients must provide NDE with proof of completion of the program for which funds were awarded. An official transcript is required and will identify the beginning of the forgiveness time period.

Application Requirements

Applications are to be submitted to the institution in which the applicant is enrolled and must include:

- A completed EETP Application for Funds; and
- A Program of Study approved by the eligible institution in which you are enrolled.

Upon approval of the application, NDE will provide the applicant with an EETP Loan Contract for review. The contract, with the applicant's original signature, must be returned by mail to NDE prior to the loan being finalized. A delay in returning the contract may result in a postponement of available funds or the withdrawal of the loan. Incomplete applications will not be considered for a loan.

Additional Information

Requests for additional information or questions regarding the Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program may be directed to Karen Buller at (402) 471-4837 or karen.buller@nebraska.gov.